(a) whether the popularity and quality of Doordarshan and AIR is declining day by day as compared to private channels despite the fact that 90 per cent of population has access to the National Channels;

(b) whether the decline in popularity of Doordarshan and AIR is attributed to the declining of quality of programmes; and

(c) if so, the concrete steps taken by Government to make Doordarshan and AIR popular once again?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) Prasar Bharati has informed that in order to fulfil the mandate of the Public Service Broadcaster to inform, educate and entertain the public, Prasar Bharati has been constantly aiming for excellence both in terms of content and quality. Doordarshan constantly reviews the quality of serials/programmes telecast on its various channels and makes efforts to further improve the contents and technical quality/ transmission. The studios and equipment are continuously being modernized to improve technical quality of programmes.

The continuous increase in the number of Private Channels and introduction of FM Radio in private sector have cut into the popularity of DD & AIR. This unavoidable consequence cannot simplistically be attributed to decline in the quality of programmes.

Allotment of equity shares

2711. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received a proposal from Balaji Telefilms Ltd. for preferential allotment of equity shares/warrants to M/s Asian Broadcasting Ltd. for consideration by FIPB;

(b) whether the proposal of Balaji was in accordance with the existing FDI norms/guidelines;

(c) if so, the reasons for restricting the equity share of M/s Asian Broadcasting Ltd. or their affiliate group (s) below 25.99 per cent when the FDI guidelines permits equity upto 100 per cent; and

(d) whether the action of Government are unwanted and goes against the FDI guidelines and if so, action taken against erring officials for violating FDI norms?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) M/s Balaji Telefilms in its application before the FIPB had itself sought limited FDI and had conveyed that the shareholding of Asian Broadcasting Ltd. will not exceed 25.99%. FIPB has already approved the proposal.

(d) Does not arise.

Appointment of retired judges

2712. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that to meet immediate requirements and clear the arrears, certain High Courts propose to appoint retired judges on *ad-hoc* basis;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether such a proposal would also be implemented in the lower courts which have built up huge arrears;

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI HANSRAJ BHARDWAJ): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Under article 235 of the Constitution of India, the administrative control over the members of subordinate Judicial Service vest with the concerned High Court. Further, in exercise of powers conferred under proviso to article 309 read with articles 233 and 234 of the Constitution, the State Government frames rules and regulations in consultation with the High Court. The members of the State Judicial Service are governed by these rules and regulations. Therefore, the service conditions, including